



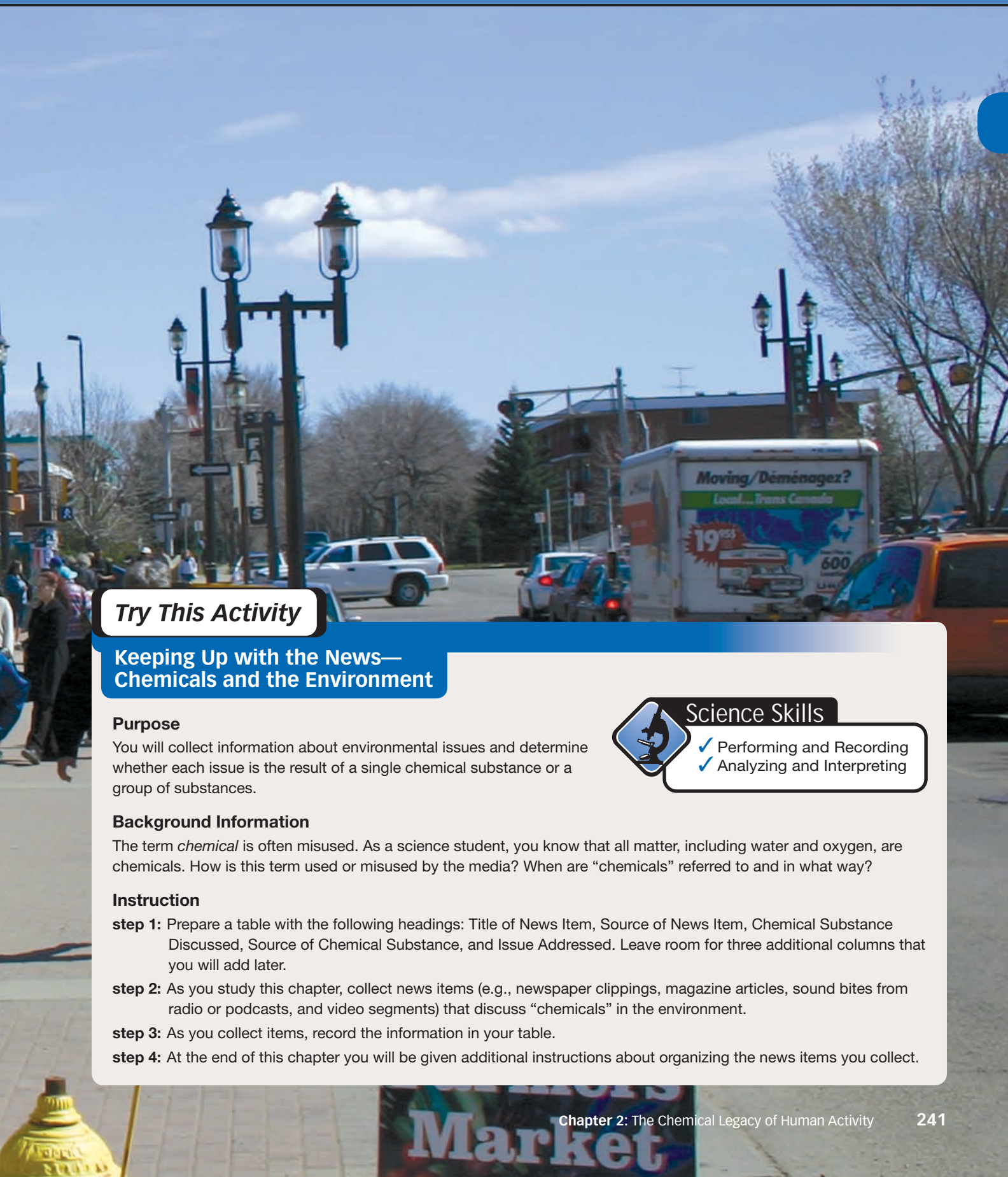
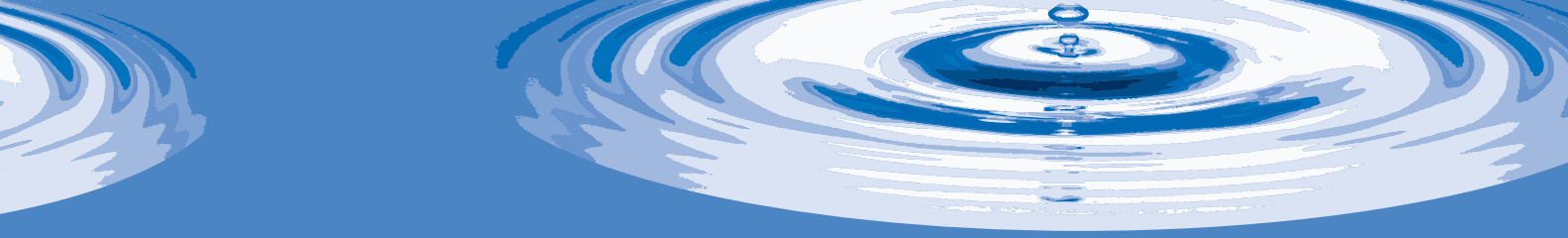
Chapter 2 The Chemical Legacy of Human Activity



“A Touch of the Farm in the Heart of the City” is the slogan for the Old Strathcona Farmers’ Market in Edmonton. Every Saturday, thousands of customers flock to the market to browse and buy from more than 130 vendors. Many people frequent the Farmers’ Market for the crafts and the entertainment; but for the most part, people make the trip to Old Strathcona for the wide array of food available.

One type of food, in particular, that many people purchase is “certified organic” food. Many have expressed concern about “chemicals” used in the production of foods and other materials. But isn’t all matter, technically, a chemical? Can chemical substances be classified as good and bad? What criteria would be used to do this?

In this unit you will consider the concerns people have about human practices and their impact on the environment. You will study substances used in agriculture, industry, and your home; and you will become aware that some of their properties may cause concern. You will also examine how science, industry, and government address concerns about the environmental impact of some human practices.



Try This Activity

Keeping Up with the News— Chemicals and the Environment

Purpose

You will collect information about environmental issues and determine whether each issue is the result of a single chemical substance or a group of substances.

Background Information

The term *chemical* is often misused. As a science student, you know that all matter, including water and oxygen, are chemicals. How is this term used or misused by the media? When are “chemicals” referred to and in what way?

Instruction

- step 1:** Prepare a table with the following headings: Title of News Item, Source of News Item, Chemical Substance Discussed, Source of Chemical Substance, and Issue Addressed. Leave room for three additional columns that you will add later.
- step 2:** As you study this chapter, collect news items (e.g., newspaper clippings, magazine articles, sound bites from radio or podcasts, and video segments) that discuss “chemicals” in the environment.
- step 3:** As you collect items, record the information in your table.
- step 4:** At the end of this chapter you will be given additional instructions about organizing the news items you collect.



Science Skills

- ✓ Performing and Recording
- ✓ Analyzing and Interpreting